

# Graduate Student Handbook 2013-2014

## Department of Sociology California State University, Northridge

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**Department of Sociology**  
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**Introduction**

Welcome to the Department of Sociology at CSU-Northridge! If you are reading this manual you have become one of our classified or conditionally classified MA students in the Department of Sociology's graduate program. The goal of this manual is to make the process of navigating your MA program a little more clear and understandable. If there is information in this handbook that you might need that is not covered, please talk to the Graduate Coordinator, chair, or graduate committee, and you will receive additional help. This will also allow us to revise the handbook to better address your needs as a student.

The Department of Sociology's master's program has been producing MA graduates for more than thirty-five years. Our graduates have gone on to university and college professorships, community college teaching, other roles in education, official governmental agencies, nonprofit helping organizations, business, and many other places throughout the San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles, and beyond.

This is an exciting time to be a part of our program. We have added many new faculty members to the department in recent years and will continue to add more. These new faculty bring additional experiences and energy to a graduate program that has built on a strong foundation of theory, methods, and the talents of several very experienced faculty. As the department and program grow, we will be seeking suggestions and other feedback from the students to make this the best possible MA program we can offer now and into the future.

Once again, welcome to the department and feel free to ask questions and become an active part of your own graduate study and our graduate program.

**The Structure of the Sociology MA Program**

A graduate program involves many parties who all come together to create the educational experience for graduate students. At CSU-Northridge, there are more than forty graduate programs and teaching credential programs. All the students in these programs are considered graduate students. Matters which involve graduate programs are handled primarily by individual departments and the Office of Graduate Studies, Research, and International Programs (referred to as Graduate Studies). Admissions to graduate study are first handled by Admissions and Records and progress on to Graduate Studies and the departments. Other parts of University administration, such as the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, may also make some decisions concerning graduate programs. The sociology department has a graduate coordinator who helps shape the curriculum and delivery of the program, does advising, disseminates information about our program and opportunities for students, does other necessary paperwork, and is there for assistance to the graduate students in the program. The chair of the sociology

department also can do these tasks as needed. The chair, additionally, is ultimately responsible for class scheduling and staffing, final approval of admissions to sociology, general program procedures and programs, responding to appeals and providing second opinions, and other tasks with regard to the program. The sociology graduate committee consists of several faculty in sociology who oversee the program, make decisions on some graduate program procedures and issues, do advisement as needed, provide input and guidance on curriculum and policy/procedures, and otherwise contribute to the working of the graduate program. The department as a whole serves to approve significant policy changes, curriculum changes, and other matters of major concern regarding the graduate program. Decisions are made by this large network of sociology faculty and University administrators. At any point a student is not satisfied with a decision at any level, appeal is possible and encouraged. The Chair and the graduate committee can hear such appeals with regard to actions by the coordinator. If a student does not feel that he/she is treated fairly at the department level, the student is encouraged to go to the office of the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences and/or the Graduate Studies office as appropriate.

### **Graduate Study versus Undergraduate Study**

Graduate study, in short, means the post-baccalaureate education that a student can receive if he/she has earned a Bachelor's degree and has shown the aptitude for more advanced training in the field.

Graduate study is different from undergraduate study in several significant ways. First, the technicalities of advisement, classes, and requirements for graduation differ. (We will cover some of the specifics later.) This is particularly true when it comes to graduate program status and classification, the academic program, and the requirements for graduation.

A second difference between graduate students and undergraduate students is that graduate students are expected to enter the graduate major with core knowledge of the field in theory, research methods, and statistics. Students who did not major in sociology are required to pass (with a B or better) necessary prerequisite classes in order to advance to MA candidate status. Students who pursue the MA in sociology can expect to deepen their understanding of theory, methods, and major sociological areas. Students should know that the faculty of the Master's level classes will presume students have a good working knowledge of theory, methods, and statistics as well as the ability to think and write critically.

A third difference between graduate study and undergraduate study is in the amount, quality, and professionalism of the work involved. Graduate students are expected to have the maturity to attend class and come on time, maintain a professional level of behavior in the class, and otherwise take responsibility for their work and performance. Full time graduate enrollment requires fewer units than undergraduate because the work is more involved, requires more time and attention, and includes a higher degree of critical thinking and application than undergraduate courses do. A rough estimate of the work of a graduate class is two to three times the amount of work for the same number of undergraduate units. Faculty presume that graduate students are dedicated to advanced learning in their fields, and this presumption frames the attitude taken toward the graduate student. One of the goals of the program is for its graduate

students to become more like apprentices to faculty mentors and less like passive, detached students. Additionally, faculty will require research papers, depth essay exams, presentations, and other kinds of work that show not only basic knowledge of the material but also the ways in which the student extends, critiques, and/or applies the material to research and theoretical issues.

Graduate schools can be a creative and challenging academic environment that will help nurture and further develop students of sociology.

### **This Handbook and Disclaimers**

This handbook will give you some of the most important information you will need in the Department of Sociology MA program. This information is based on departmental policies and practices, information from the Graduate Studies office, and other sources. The handbook may be adjusted periodically as needed to reflect policy changes within the University, Graduate Studies, and the Department. It is **very** important for students to double check and verify all information with the Graduate Coordinator and/or Chair and with Graduate Studies when there is any doubt.

Self-initiated actions that students need to take will be noted in bold italics and indented.

## SECTION 1: Becoming a Fully Classified Graduate Student

Students accepted into the MA program in sociology will have one of two statuses: classified or conditionally classified student. Fully classified students have met all the necessary prerequisites and University rules for classification. Classification means that the student is advanced to full candidacy in the graduate program and can file a formal program for graduation.

Conditionally classified students are given this status because they have not met certain prerequisites for advancement to candidacy. A partial list of these possible prerequisites follows:

- University:

- a) The student must fulfill one or more of these criteria: undergraduate degree and 3.0 GPA, graduate degree from an accredited institution, appropriate scores on GRE (50th percentile or above in one of the three areas of the GRE exam) or other acceptable examinations.
- b) The student must also achieve a passing score on the Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam given at CSUN or an accepted writing proficiency exam given at another institution. Be prepared to show documentation.

- Department:

- a) The student must demonstrate through course work that they have the appropriate background in sociology. Graduate students from the CSUN undergraduate sociology program have already done so by virtue of their graduation with the appropriate GPA. Graduate students who came from other undergraduate sociology programs need to demonstrate theory and methods training equivalent to that of our CSUN sociology graduates. These requirements specifically include a course in social statistics at the upper division level, a course in research methods, a course in classical theory (Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, etc.), and a course in contemporary theory (Baudrillard, D. Smith, Habermas, Goffman, etc.). Any of these four courses that have not been taken must be taken at CSUN or other four year college or university (not a community college) prior to approval of classification.
- b) Students who do not have an undergraduate major in sociology, whether from CSUN or another institution, will be required to take the theory and methods core described above. Depending on the amount of sociological course work in the student's background, additional courses in sociology may be required.
- c) Additional assessment of academic preparation may lead to the addition of prerequisites outside the department to address other areas. These are decisions that are made on a case-by-case basis.

✓ ***Student Action (for Conditionally Classified Students Only): Students who are Conditionally Classified must fulfill prerequisites and request classification PRIOR to the***

*completion of 12 units of work that will apply to the formal program. Prerequisites such as SOC 364/L (statistics), SOC 497/L (research methods), SOC 368/S (classical theory), and SOC 468/S (contemporary theory) do NOT apply to the 12 unit maximum. Completing classification as soon as possible is highly desirable. Complete the classification form, available in the department or at Graduate Studies and take it to the Graduate Coordinator (or Chair) for signature and submission to the Graduate Evaluators. Classification prior to the completion of 12 units of coursework is a university policy and is known as the “12 unit rule.”*

- ✓ *Student Action (for Conditionally Classified Students with more than 12 units of formal course work): Students who have exceeded the 12 unit rule need to get a petition form from Graduate Studies which must be signed by the Graduate Coordinator or Chair to submit with the classification paperwork and request waiver of this rule. This kind of petition should be avoided if at all possible.*

## **SECTION 2: The Sociology MA Program**

The MA program in sociology is a program of 30 units of coursework, plus enrollment in a "culminating experience" course (Sociology 697 or Sociology 698). In general, the program is devoted to 1) providing students with advanced training in sociological research methods and theory and 2) providing education for the student in a sociological specialization. Our program is designed to be applicable to both the nonacademic and academic goals students may have.

In general, this is intended as a two year program for a full time MA student who is either not employed or who is working very few hours; students who have additional obligations outside of their academic pursuits (e.g. families, work, etc.) should expect to spend one or more semesters completing their degree. By university policy, all students are expected to finish the program within seven years. At seven years, course work taken toward the degree is considered expired and generally will not be applicable. For course work more than seven years old, up to nine units for the program may be validated, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and Chair. Validation means making the units for the course current and applicable to the program. This requires additional work to demonstrate currency in the subject area to either the professor who taught the original class or to someone who teaches the class. This additional work may include, among other things, examinations or papers dealing with the subject matter. All requests for validation are subject to approval by the Department of Sociology and Graduate Studies and are not guaranteed.

The "formal program" is a process that is completed through the Graduate Student Degree Progress Report (DPR) process. Once a student applies for graduation, the DPR system will automatically generate a formal program for this student, and if qualified, the student will be “advanced to candidacy.” Advanced to candidacy status is reached when a student has been formally classified, has completed their 30-units of coursework (with a minimum 3.0 gpa), and has only their culminating experience to complete. There is no additional paperwork that a student must complete in order to complete their formal program and become advanced to candidacy. A student’s formal program can be accessed through the DPR system available in SOLAR, and it specifies the courses that are being applied to the program, when they were (or

will be) taken, and grades if available. The formal program details the specific plans for courses and completion of degree requirements. Please consult with the graduate coordinator and/or a Graduate Studies graduate evaluator if any changes need to be applied to the courses listed in the formal program.



## The Program at a Glance

- ❖ Core classes: Students must complete 12 units of theory and methods, listed below
  - Courses for the Specialization: These 12 units should cover key areas in student's particular sociological specialty; they may also cover other related sociological topics
  - Electives: These 6 units can cover other areas of interest or give additional coverage to the specialty area. In electives, the student may apply approved course work from related fields. Students must have the approval of the Graduate Coordinator or Chair for any of the 6 units taken outside the department.
  - "Culminating Experience": The comprehensive exams and the thesis are what is known as culminating experiences. These entail a demonstration of the sum total of the graduate learning experience, **above and beyond the course work taken**. The sum total of the experience includes course work, additional study, field experience, and other areas as necessary for the student to develop an advanced knowledge of the field of sociology and to show that he/she can apply this knowledge in critical thinking about research and theory in sociology. **The courses in the program give the student the tools to progress to this level of mastery, but the culminating experience includes material above and beyond the material taught in the courses.**
  
- ❖ Please refer to your graduate coordinator and the list of acceptable courses and other program policies in the appendix for specific rules on what specialization and elective courses can be counted.

## The Curriculum

A graduate student's program includes both core classes, which every sociology MA candidate must complete, and a set of courses focused on an area of substantive specialty.

### **Requirements:**

#### CORE COURSES:

- ◆ SOC 601 Sociological Theory in Historical Perspective
- ◆ SOC 670 Studies in Contemporary Sociology
- ◆ SOC 690 Social Research (students are expected to take SOC 680 prior to enrolling  
in SOC 690)
- ◆ SOC 691A Advanced Social Research Techniques (Qualitative Methods)

**PROGRAM SPECIALTY COURSES:**

- ◆ 12 units of approved graduate courses, most targeted toward the area of specialization

**ELECTIVES:**

- ◆ 6 units of electives

**CULMINATING EXPERIENCE:**

- ◆ Enrollment and successful completion of one of the two:
  - ❖ SOC 697 Directed Comprehensive Studies (successful completion of this class requires a passing score on the comprehensive exam. Completing this course, in addition to those specified on the formal program, will complete the requirements for the MA degree in sociology.
  - ❖ SOC 698 Thesis (successful completion of this class requires writing and orally defending a thesis approved by the thesis committee. Completing this course, in addition to those specified on the formal program, will complete the requirements for the MA degree in sociology.)

TOTAL: 30 units plus comprehensive or thesis units

**Suggested Timelines and Schedules**

**For a fully classified, full time student to finish in two years:**

**FIRST FALL ENROLLED**

SOC 601 Sociological Theory in Historical Perspective  
SOC 680 Advanced Statistics  
SOC 695C Proseminar in Sociology (strongly recommended for all students during their first year of study)

**FIRST SPRING ENROLLED**

SOC 670 Studies in Contemporary Sociology  
SOC 690 Social Research Methods  
SOC 691A Advanced Social Research Techniques (Qualitative Methods)

**FIRST SUMMER ENROLLED**

- A comprehensive exam student should work on independent reading and research related to the exams.
- A thesis student should plan to complete their thesis proposal. Official work on the thesis cannot move forward without passing the thesis proposal hearing and meeting the department core and overall GPA requirements.
- A thesis student should seek human subjects approval, if needed and not already done. After approval is secured, a thesis student should be engaged in data collection.
- Some 400-level summer courses may be eligible for graduate program credit. Approval of these courses is determined on a case-by-case basis.

## **SECOND FALL ENROLLED**

- 9 units of specialization courses and/or electives

## **SECOND SPRING ENROLLED**

SOC 697 Directed Comprehensive Exam Studies  
 or SOC 698 Thesis

- Any additional electives needed to bring program course work (not including comps or thesis) to a total of 30 units, as planned out in a student's formal program.
- For a two year program, a comprehensive student needs to take (and pass) exams.
- For a two year program, a thesis student needs to complete the thesis, the oral defense, and deposit the thesis with Graduate Studies by the submission deadline (usually the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week of the semester).

## **SECOND SUMMER ENROLLED (IF NEEDED)**

A thesis student may, in some circumstances, be able to finish a thesis and defense in the summer, if needed. Comprehensive exams will not be given in the summer.

### For students in other situations:

Frequently, students will not be able to undertake a "full time" course load or will have to take undergraduate prerequisites that will make the above schedule unrealistic. A few rules of thumb: 1) Prerequisites must come first. Take these as soon as possible. They allow you to move on to the graduate core classes. 2) As soon as you can take the core classes, do it. Each core class is only offered once per year. You could be extending your program even further by putting them off until the end. Also, taking the core classes as soon as possible allows you more time to fully integrate the knowledge for either the comprehensive examination or the oral examination for the thesis. 3) A possible exception for rule of thumb #2: If the department offers a 500- or 600-level

course in your area of specialization, it is usually wise to take it when it is offered. The nature of graduate course offerings is such that specialty courses are only offered every 2 years at best. 4) If you are taking prerequisites, you may still take other graduate courses that can count on your program as long as you do not exceed 12 units of applicable classes prior to filing for classification. 5) Pick courses carefully and seek advisement from the Graduate Coordinator. This is **particularly** true for students in their first year, but it is generally true for all students.

- ✓ ***Student Action: Students need to seek advisement, enroll in classes, and complete them with an overall GPA of 3.0 to remain in good standing in the program. Students need to maintain enrollment in courses in the program. For any semesters during which no classes are taken, students should contact Admissions and Records for procedures to keep them from being dropped from the program. Students also need to be enrolled during the semester they plan to finish. See the Graduate Coordinator for enrollment options if you have previously enrolled in SOC 697 or SOC 698 and have completed your other program classes.***
- ✓ ***Student Action: All 400-level courses taken for the program must have approval from the Graduate Coordinator. Students need to file an "Approval for 400-level Courses Form" that is sent out each semester or available from the Graduate Coordinator.***
- ✓ ***Student action for comprehensive exams and theses are covered in those particular sections.***
- ✓ ***Enrollment gaps of more than two semesters will result in a student being "discontinued" from the university. By university policy, all discontinued students must reapply to the university, and if necessary, their home department. Students who plan to take a leave of absence for more than two semesters should consult with their graduate coordinator to determine the effect their leave will have on completing their course of studies.***

### **SECTION 3: Culminating Experience--Comprehensive Exams**

The comprehensive exam option is recommended for students who 1) want the MA as a terminal degree, 2) want the MA degree as a requirement for a job which does not involve program development or evaluation or other research-based work, and/or 3) do not wish to or cannot do a thesis for whatever reasons. Undertaking comprehensive exams does not prevent one from being admitted to Ph.D. programs or from pursuing their research ideas.

The comprehensive exam covers three main areas: sociological theory, sociological methods, and a substantive area. Comprehensive exams can take a number of formats: e.g. take-home, open note exams; closed-note exams administered in campus computer labs, etc. The dates and times for the exams will be determined no later than the end of the second week of the semester.

Topic lists and bibliographies are available for methods, theory, and most of the primary specialization areas to assist you with your preparations. You should consult with individual committees in preparing and reviewing bibliographies for each of your areas of study. **It is**

crucial to seek feedback, advice, and input from the members of the examining committees. Students are much more likely to be successful with active interaction with the faculty to help them complete their learning. Remember, too, that preparing for the comprehensive exams involves going above and beyond the work in your courses.

✓ *Student Action:*

- 1) *Prior to taking the comprehensive exams, the student needs to begin preparations as soon as the core classes are taken. Preparation should include not only review of course material but additional reading and study of topics and sources found in the study guides for the exams and in suggestions by faculty in the theory, methods, and substantive area. Begin working with faculty to help direct your study and learning. Focus on aspects of critical thinking and writing as well as on what the material says itself.*
- 2) *The student should select a substantive area of specialization and create a program that provides the best academic preparation for the area. Current areas of specialization include (but may not be limited to): criminology and criminal justice, gender roles, family, gerontology, social psychology, ethnic relations, and organizational analysis.*
- 3) *The semester prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exams will be taken, the student should review their formal program available through the SOLAR DPR system. Additionally, the student must apply for graduation with Admissions and Records.*
- 4) *After a student is classified, has completed course work, has completed a formal program, and has maintained/achieved a 3.0 GPA, the student needs to enroll in SOC 697, Directed Comprehensive Studies in the semester the comp exams will be taken. It is also possible to enroll in SOC 697 with remaining courses on the program if those courses will be completed the same semester as the comps are taken. Enrolling in courses directly related to the exams in the semester in which the exam is taken is highly discouraged and may result in a poorer performance on the exam. Remember that you **MUST** enroll in SOC 697 through SOLAR. Release of permission numbers for SOC 697 will be done through the Graduate Coordinator and/or Department Chair who will verify that the student has met all requirements to take the comprehensive exam.*
- 5) *In the semester in which the comps are to be taken, the student must file an "Intent to Take Comprehensive Exams form with the Department of Sociology. Additionally, the student is highly encouraged to schedule a pre-comps conference with the Graduate Coordinator within the first two months of the semester in which the comps are to be taken. The student **MUST** be enrolled in order to take the comprehensive examination.*

*6) The student needs to take the comprehensive exams when scheduled and pass the exams in order to complete the requirements for the MA*

*The student is allowed two attempts to pass the comprehensive exam. If the exam is not passed in those two attempts, the student will no longer qualify for an MA in sociology. Once a student has enrolled in SOC 697, he/she cannot change to a thesis option.*

The current department rules concerning comprehensive exams are as follows:

1) The exams are given a "blind" grading by the faculty in the area. This means that the only notation on the exam is a code which is known only by the department secretary. Exams are graded by all faculty on the committee who discuss the grades and come to a joint decision as to the grade on each exam. Exams may be given grades of "high pass," "pass," "marginal pass," or "fail." Normally, the student is only given the result of "high pass", "pass", or "fail" for the exams. If the student requests additional feedback, he/she may receive more feedback on answers and exams judged to be marginally passing. In general, exams are graded on several criteria: demonstration of required knowledge in the area, demonstration of the ability to use that knowledge in a critical way (in other words, not to simply "regurgitate" the information), and the quality of the writing and argumentation. As this list may not be exhaustive, it is extremely important for students taking the exam to discuss expectations with each of the committee members for the theory, methods, and substantive area exams.

2) The substantive take home exams require consultation with several key works in the field that should be included in the exam. All answers must include proper citation of all borrowed material, quoted or not. A bibliography needs to be included as well. Please use ASR format for citation and bibliography unless your committee says otherwise. **Plagiarism of any sort will NOT be tolerated, and appropriate steps will be taken to address such conduct within the policies of the department and the University.** If you are in doubt, please check the University policies concerning student misconduct (a copy has been provided in this handbook) and faculty for any questions you may have.

3) Students who receive a passing score on all three exams will receive a passing grade for the comprehensive exams as a whole. These scores will be reported to Graduate Studies, and providing the rest of the program requirements have been fulfilled, the University will confer the MA degree on the student.

4) A student receiving a passing score on two area exams and a failing score on the other will have the decision of overall pass/fail considered on a case by case basis by the comprehensive exam committee in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair, as appropriate for the particular situation. Possible outcomes of this consultation can include deciding to use additional or alternative means of assessing student competence, allowing another attempt at that area exam at a later date, or a decision to fail the entire exam.

5) A student who receives a failing score on two area exams will receive a failing grade on the entire comprehensive exam which will be reported to Graduate Studies as a failed comprehensive exam. Students will not be required to retake the passed area exam. If the

student fails the retake of the area exam (a second fail of any particular exam), the student will receive a second fail on the entire comprehensive exam.

6) When a student has officially failed one entire exam, he or she is only given one more opportunity to pass the exams and earn the degree. If a student fails the entire exam twice, the student cannot make additional attempts at the exam and cannot earn the MA in sociology (i.e. they will be disqualified by the university).

7) Appeal of any decision made at any part of this process should be made first to the Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair (and graduate committee, if necessary) and then to Graduate Studies for reconsideration. Acceptable protocol should be followed. The nature of this protocol will be provided on a case by case basis as necessary.

### **In a Nutshell: Steps to Take**

- 1) *Take prerequisites and get classified*
- 2) *Complete and review formal program*
- 3) *Complete core classes and work on other courses*
- 4) *As core classes are taken, begin study and work with faculty to prepare for the exams*
- 5) *Finish all coursework*
- 6) *Apply to graduate the semester before you are to finish*
- 7) *Verify that you meet GPA and program completion requirements*
- 8) *File for graduation*
- 9) *Continue study for the exams and continue seeking feedback from faculty. If not already done, work on sample answers from past exams exams for critique from committee members*
- 10) *The semester you plan to finish, file an Intent to Take Comprehensive Exams form with the Sociology Department. Meet with the Graduate Coordinator and your exam area committee members.*
- 11) *Take exams when scheduled.*

## **SECTION 4: Culminating Experience--The Thesis Option**

The thesis option is recommended for students who 1) wish to have a formal research project they can use to support their pursuit of research employment or admission to Ph.D. programs after completing the MA, 2) wish to pursue employment which emphasizes program development, evaluation, and/or research analysis, and/or 3) who, for whatever reasons, wish to deepen their knowledge and experience in the area of research.

The student who is best suited for the thesis option is one who has a strong command of the English language and composition, is research-oriented and skilled, who is capable of working independently and taking direction, and who has a desire and the time to do the work involved in the thesis. The thesis is **not** to be seen as easier than comprehensive exams and is not a way to avoid examination in theory and methods. The proposal hearing requires a passing performance on an oral examination in theory and methods for advancement to the thesis. Students considering a thesis should talk, in depth, with the Graduate Coordinator and review copies of recent theses in the department to get a better sense of what is expected in a thesis.

### Thesis Guidelines

The student who wishes to write a thesis must fulfill the following qualifying criteria for final approval of thesis option:

#### ✓ *Student Actions:*

- 1) The student must inform the graduate advisor of the intention to pursue a thesis prior to the completion of 18 units of course work in the graduate program. Any exceptions to this rule must be for compelling reasons and approved by the Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair.**
- 2) The student must seek advisement from the Graduate Coordinator every semester prior to completion of the thesis proposal and hearing. This advisement will include course selection, feedback on graduate work done, and thesis planning.**
- 3) The student is required to earn a 3.5 GPA in all sociology core courses with no grade below a B.**
- 4) The student is required to maintain a 3.25 GPA in all work in the graduate program.**

Students who meet these criteria may progress to the formal thesis proposal. After completing no more than 24 units, the student must complete the steps listed below.

NOTE: While progressing to the formal proposal is dependent upon the student fulfilling the qualifying criteria, students who wish to pursue the thesis should begin their preparations before this point.



✓ ***Student Actions:***

- 1) ***The student will name a thesis chair and a thesis committee who will be able to advise the student in the preparation of the thesis with respect to method, theory, and subject matter pertinent to the proposed thesis research.***
- 2) ***The student will prepare a thesis proposal that outlines the research to be done. The proposal will include reference to existing literature as well as a detailed and methodologically sound plan for conducting the research. This proposal will be developed in close consultation with the thesis chair.***
- 3) ***The student will complete and pass a thesis proposal hearing during which the student will undergo an oral examination on the thesis proposal and sociological theory and methods. This should occur no later than the second semester after completing the core courses, except in very special circumstances and as exempted by the Graduate Coordinator and/or Chair. The proposal hearing may occur in the semester in which the last core course(s) are completed, but final approval to pursue the thesis will not occur until final grades are posted. Students will be given only one proposal hearing. If a student does not pass, in the judgment of the committee, the student must take the comprehensive exams to earn the MA in sociology.***

After notification that the student has passed the proposal hearing/oral examination, the Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair will consider final approval for the student to write the thesis. Only in very rare circumstances would the Graduate Coordinator or Chair contradict the results of the proposal hearing.

✓ ***Student Actions:***

- 1) ***After passing the proposal hearing, the student will register their thesis through the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) system, specifying the title of their thesis, their committee Chair, and identifying the other members of the committee. Additionally, the student should get a copy of the thesis guidelines from the office of Graduate Studies or their web site. The thesis MUST follow required formats.***
- 2) ***The student and the Graduate Coordinator (or Chair) will complete the formal program process and review their formal program.***
- 3) ***The student will conduct, analyze, and write the original work comprising the thesis according to the guidelines set up by Graduate Studies and in accordance with accepted professional standards and formats. All permissions from Human Subjects must be secured PRIOR to any research involving human subjects. Additionally, any research that involves international travel must be approved by the CSUN Office of Insurance and Risk Management. If your research involves human subjects and/or international travel, please make sure you are securing approval for your research well in advance (at least two months) of when you plan to begin your research.***

- 4) *In the semester in which the student wishes to defend the thesis, he/she must enroll in SOC 698.*
- 5) *Prior to the defense, the student will file a complete copy of the thesis to the Graduate Evaluators to check for format and other compliance with requirements of Graduate Studies. These thesis evaluator reviews are completed through the Graduate Studies ETD system.*
- 6) *The student will submit a complete copy of the thesis to the thesis committee for review. The student will complete revisions to the thesis requested by the committee. Where there are differences of opinion regarding work on the thesis, the thesis chair will attempt to resolve these differences. The committee must inform the student if the student can set a defense date.*
- 7) *After completing the revisions, the student will submit another copy of the thesis to the committee. This copy will be considered the "reading copy" for the committee's preparations for the defense. The reading copy will be submitted no sooner than two weeks prior to the tentative defense date.*
- 8) *Final completion of a reading draft of the thesis will be followed with an oral defense with the thesis committee. This will occur no earlier than two weeks after submission of a defense copy of the thesis to the committee. This defense will consist of an oral examination on the thesis and other sociological issues which arise from it. There are three outcomes possible of the thesis defense: 1) the thesis defense is passed and the thesis accepted as is; 2) the thesis defense is passed, and the thesis is accepted pending revisions required for committee approval; 3) the thesis defense is not passed, and the thesis is not accepted.*
- 9) *When the thesis is passed, the student will obtain the signatures of their committee members on the thesis signature page, and file the final draft of their thesis through the ETD system. Committee members will indicate their approval of the thesis through the ETD system. Any required revisions will be reviewed by the thesis chair prior to the student's submission of the final thesis to Graduate Studies.*
- 10) *Note: Plagiarism is a violation of Department and University standards of student conduct and will not be tolerated. Any student caught plagiarizing will face repercussions within the scope of Department and University policies. If you have any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, the University policy on academic misconduct has been included in the index of this handbook. Also consult with faculty with questions you may have.*

Students who do not pass a thesis defense will not receive an MA degree in sociology from CSUN. A student who fails the thesis defense cannot change to a comprehensive exam option after thesis failure. Passage of this defense qualifies the student for the MA degree, after any necessary revisions are completed and required protocol for Graduate Studies is completed.

Appeal of any decision made at any part of this process should be made first to the Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair (and graduate committee if appropriate) and then to Graduate Studies for reconsideration. Acceptable protocol should be followed. The actual protocol will be provided on a case by case basis as necessary.

### **In a Nutshell: Steps to Take**

- 1) *Think about possible topics. Write papers in classes or in that can help you organize your thoughts and provide opportunities to write drafts of a proposal.*
- 2) *Meet with the graduate coordinator for guidance the first and every semester.*
- 3) *Find a chair who will guide you in preparing the proposal.*
- 4) *Find two other faculty members with expertise in the area of the thesis who would be willing to serve on your thesis committee.*
- 5) *Complete core classes with a 3.5 GPA and no grade below a B.*
- 6) *At the end of the first year or beginning of the second, have proposal meeting.*
- 7) *Register your thesis through the Graduate Studies ETD system.*
- 8) *Pick or download the thesis guidelines from Graduate Studies*
- 9) *At least two months prior to collecting data, submit Human Subjects protocol (and if necessary request permission for international travel) and wait for approval to begin If your research involves human subjects and/or international travel, you must secure approval for your research in advance (at least two months) of when you plan to begin your research.*
- 10) *Collect and analyze data and write the thesis under the supervision of your committee.*
- 11) *Finish the remainder of your coursework.*

- 12) *In the semester prior to your planning to defend your thesis, apply for graduation.*
- 13) *Enroll in SOC 698, Thesis, in the semester you plan to defend your thesis.*
- 14) *Follow Graduate Studies guidelines for format and make appointment with graduate evaluator in Graduate Studies to look at the thesis.*
- 15) *Complete the thesis defense.*

### **SECTION 5: Filing for Graduation (Hooray!)**

Graduation is the final stage of your graduate career (of course!). There are several offices that play a role in your graduation. (These lists of duties may not be complete). The Department of Sociology contributes assistance in filing the classification paperwork and helping with formal program processing, administration of comprehensive exams, and evaluating thesis defenses. The department will also provide general assistance with regard to the thesis, comprehensive exam preparation, and other academic/curricular requirements. Graduate Studies completes a graduation evaluation and informs the student of what requirements remain for graduation. They also receive the outcome reports on thesis defenses and comprehensive exams as well as receiving the final copies of the thesis from students who have successfully defended. In general, they verify that you qualify for the degree. Admissions and Records processes the degree.

In the year before you graduate (or sooner), be sure to visit the Career Center and its Career Fairs, faculty in your specialty, and/or the Graduate Coordinator to talk about your post-MA options if you need more information on careers, Ph.D. and other graduate programs, or other information.

The cap and gown rental and graduation ceremony activities are handled outside the Department of Sociology and Graduate Studies. You will receive information in the mail about them. You will be sent materials concerning commencement based on the date of graduation provided on your graduation application.

- ✓ *Student Action: A student who wishes to graduate needs to have/do the following things: 1) make sure the GPA is at least a 3.0; 2) make sure that he/she is fully classified and has a formal program on file with graduate studies; 3) file a graduation application (complete with fee) with Graduate Studies in the semester prior to expected graduation, and 4) be sure that all remaining courses on the program are finished and the comprehensive exams or thesis are successfully completed.*

### **SECTION 6: Additional Bits of Information, Tips and Advice**

## With Regard to the Program

*Getting the Most Out of Your Program:* The students who do the best work, and who benefit the most from their graduate program, are those who take a proactive role in their education and do more than the required minimum. Participating in University and professional meetings, attending workshops, and otherwise being involved in department, University, and professional activities enhances the graduate experience. A proactive role also means seeking advisement, getting to know faculty and working with them, getting to know fellow students and exchanging ideas, actively planning the time spent as graduate students, and most of all, remembering why they are here--to learn more about sociology!

*Being Prepared:* One of the most frequent comments made by first year students is how unprepared they sometimes feel for the graduate courses, particularly core classes. The advanced course work in the graduate classes requires that the student come to the class with a good understanding of theory, methods, and statistics. It may be useful to you, if this is something that applies, to do additional reading and study prior to taking some classes. In particular, one might want to generally review theorists prior to taking SOC 601 or SOC 670. For quantitative methods, SOC 680 and SOC 690, it is highly advisable to review undergraduate methods and statistics material as well as any training you may have received on SPSS. Doing these things will help ensure success. Most of all, don't give up! If you find you are having difficulty with material, contact the instructor and talk about ways you might approach the problem.

*Getting Instruction in Specialty Areas:* There may be some specialty areas in which 500- or 600-level courses may not be available for your program. In order to get courses and instruction in some specialty areas, you may want to explore these options. 1) You may have up to 9 units of 400-level courses, with extra work to make it a graduate learning experience, subject to Graduate Coordinator or Chair approval. 2) There might be applicable courses in other departments that might apply to your specialty. These should be chosen in close consultation with the Graduate Coordinator (or Chair). There is a limit of 6 units of course work outside sociology. In order to apply courses outside of the sociology department to the formal program, students must have the approval of the Graduate Coordinator or Chair prior to enrolling.

*Changing Your Program:* You may find that, for whatever reason, you have to change a course or courses in your official program. If this occurs, please see the Graduate Coordinator, Graduate Studies, or Department Chair for assistance.

*Course Repeats:* The Department of Sociology does not allow for repeating courses to improve grades except under the most extreme of circumstances. By university policy, a maximum of six-units of coursework may be repeated, subject to the approval of the Department of Sociology and Graduate Studies

*Full-time versus Part-time:* Full-time student status for a graduate student requires enrollment in seven or more units of 500- or 600-level work or 12 units of undergraduate level work. A combination of undergraduate and graduate level course work may amount to full-time or part-

time enrollment, depending on the number of units enrolled in and what level they are. If there is doubt, contact Admissions and Records for clarification with regard to fees and Financial Aid with regard to enrollment status and financial aid awards. Part-time status is defined as enrollment in six or fewer units of study.

*Incompletes:* In the event of a serious problem that is **unforeseeable and unavoidable** that interferes with the completion of a course, the student may request a grade of Incomplete from the instructor. The student must, however, have completed and passed some work in the course. An incomplete is not appropriate for an entire course. If unforeseen circumstances prohibit a student from completing any of the work in a course, that student should seek a withdrawal as soon as possible. The instructor will decide if the incomplete will be given and then you and the instructor must fill out an Incomplete form, available Office of the Department of Sociology. This paperwork will detail what needs to be done to lift the incomplete. **If the incomplete is not finished within one calendar year of the grade being given, this grade converts into an "IC," will not carry any credit, will be computed as an "F," and will significantly affect your GPA. This "IC" can result in academic probation or disqualification.** In a rare number of circumstances, a student may be given an extension on an incomplete. To apply for this extension, a form must be filled out detailing why the extension is requested; it must be signed by the appropriate parties (including the instructor), and it must be taken to Admissions and Records. Do not count on extensions, however, as the University has adopted very strict criteria with regard to extensions of incompletes. If an extension is not filed within the year the incomplete is to be made up, extensions will NOT be given retroactively by the University, and the F will stay on the record. Incompletes are only to be used when circumstances (such as illness, death, natural disaster, etc.) prevent the completion of the course. Finish an incomplete as soon as possible. When the incomplete is finished, be sure to follow up with the instructor and Admissions and Records that a grade was submitted and recorded for your final work in the course.

### Comprehensive Exams and Theses

*When You Can Switch "Culminating Experiences":* By University rules, students cannot switch from comprehensive exams to the thesis option after enrolling in SOC 697. Thesis students can switch to comprehensive exams from a thesis option as long as there has not been a thesis defense. Some rules can be petitioned to Graduate Studies, but petitions require Graduate Coordinator and/or Department Chair approval. Approval to attempt to switch from comps to thesis will not be considered except in the most unusual of circumstances.

*Working a Thesis into a Program:* Theses can take a good deal of time as you are doing a literature review, gathering and analyzing data, and writing up the final product. One way that a student can manage the thesis project is to do some of the work in the context of other classes. Some classes will want you to do a literature review or a research proposal paper. These can be used to help you develop a proposal. Independent studies can help give additional credit and guidance in substantive literature reviews, data gathering, and data analysis. Even if courses are not directly linked to your thesis interest, you still might be able to develop some ideas that complement what you are interested in working on.

*Taking Advantage of Resources Available to do a Thesis:* Graduate Studies offers the opportunity for thesis students to apply for small grants that will help them with some financial aspect of the research including photocopying articles (not the thesis itself), limited travel, supplies and equipment, payments to interviewees, and the like. Grant proposals are normally due early in the fall semester. Apply for this assistance if you are working on a thesis. The costs of doing a thesis can add up. Contact Graduate Studies for more information on this and other thesis supports.

*Finishing:* There are occasions in which students have undertaken thesis projects that may take more time, energy, and resources than anticipated. In this situation, the student should decide if the thesis experience is most important (thus delaying graduation) or whether it is more important to finish the program in a more expeditious manner. In the latter case, some students may wish to change from the thesis option to the comprehensive exams option. What is most important is that the student is getting the kind of educational experience that is desired and needed while still being able to finish the program. Advisement with the Graduate Coordinator and/or Department chair as well as with the thesis chair can assist you in this kind of decision.

#### Becoming Aware of Resources and Opportunities from the University and elsewhere

The University sponsors several different kinds of opportunities for graduate students to get a variety of experiences and support for their academic goals. Additionally, there are other sources for assistance and support. Get connected to the campus, check web sites, and see what there is available for students. Some of these resources are as follows:

Financial aid, in addition to administering needs-based support, also provides information for several scholarships which are awarded by the CSUN Scholarship Committee. These are given to continuing students and re based on academic achievement and need. Contact Financial Aid for more details and deadlines.

The CSU graduate equity fellowship is an award which provides financial assistance to students with both need and academic excellence. Students are required to have a FAFSA on file with Financial Aid. Generally, qualified students are notified by Graduate Studies and given information and deadlines. For more information, contact Graduate Studies.

The California Pre-Doctoral Program is a CSU program which awards up to \$3,000 to upper division undergraduate students and graduate students in the CSU wishing to go on to doctoral study. This program is for students from groups underrepresented in their fields who show promise for doctoral study. The program provides money for activities related to exploring, preparing, and applying for doctoral programs. Contact Graduate Studies or visit the web site: [www.calstate.edu/predoc](http://www.calstate.edu/predoc) for more information. Generally, the deadlines for application come in early spring, though they are set each year and may differ from year to year.

Thesis grants, from Graduate Studies, can provide some financial assistance for the costs of doing a thesis. Contact Graduate Studies for more information.

The Association of Retired Faculty also offers awards for excellent theses, given at the end of the graduate career, in the spring.

Graduate Awards are given through the Office of Graduate Studies as well. These awards recognize academic and personal achievement. Examples of these awards include: 1) The President's Associates Outstanding Graduate Student Award, 2) The Robert H. Schiffman Memorial Scholarship Award, and 3) Association of Retired Faculty Memorial Award. Eligibility requirements are announced by Graduate Studies in the spring semester, and the awards are announced and given during Honors Convocation. The Graduate Studies web site or office can provide information and applications.

Graduate Studies also is the recipient for information concerning other outside opportunities for graduate students including awards, scholarships, and fellowships.

The Department of Sociology have several merit-based awards given to students. Graduate students have received some of them. Normally, selection of graduate student recipients is based on nomination from faculty and the Chair. Check with the graduate coordinator and/or chair for more details.

The Department of Sociology may also have a limited number of hourly assistantships for students to assist professors. There is also a position for peer advising and for the lab. The availability of these differs from year to year. Contact the Department of Sociology for more information.

Travel money: In the past, students who have presented papers at conferences have been able to apply for a small award to help them with travel. Most of the awards have been given through the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, though other sources such as Graduate Studies and Associated Students may also be able to help. Contact the Department of Sociology if you are on the program of a conference and wish to apply for College travel funds. Contact Graduate Studies and Associated Students for availability and application for funding they may provide. Be aware that availability of funds is not guaranteed.

The University sponsors a student research competition for undergraduates and graduates to present their work. It is a great experience to do so and may result in an award. Graduate Studies has information about this event.

Do not forget about sociology and special associations. Many of them, as well as divisions within them, sponsor paper competitions which often give cash awards. Some require presentation of the paper, and others do not. Such associations as the ASA (as well as several specialty sections), PSA, other regional associations, American Society of Criminology, and other specialty organizations all hold student paper competitions. Winning or placing in one of these not only may provide some money but also an achievement which looks very good on resumes, vitas, and graduate school applications.



These are several of the kinds of opportunities out there for students for awards and assistance. There may be many more you may find. Take advantage of these kinds of programs as they will benefit you in many ways.

## **APPENDIX**

### **General Information**

Resources and Phone Numbers  
Department of Sociology Faculty and Specialties

### **MA Program Information and Resources**

Program Planning Form  
Acceptable Courses and Policies  
Graduate Course Approval for 400-level courses

### **Comprehensive Exam Information and Materials**

Intent to Take Comprehensive Exams form  
Comprehensive Study Materials  
    Bibliographies and Study Guides  
        Theory  
        Methods  
    Available Materials for Substantive Areas  
    Sample Comprehensive Exams

### **Thesis Information and Materials**

Graduate Studies Guidelines for Thesis Preparation

## **Resources and Phone Numbers**

### **Department of Sociology**

Santa Susana Hall 321  
(818) 677-3591

### **Chair, Department of Sociology**

Dr. Herman DeBose  
Santa Susana Hall 321  
(818) 677-3591  
hdebose@csun.edu

### **Graduate Coordinator, Department of Sociology**

Dr. David Boyns  
Santa Susana Hall 337  
(818) 677-6803 or 3591  
david.boyns@csun.edu (preferred)

### **Graduate Studies, Research, and International Programs**

Dr. M. Helena Noronha, Interim Associate Vice President  
Ms. Tiffany Boner and Ms. Tanya Bermudez, Graduate Evaluators  
Mr. Scott Perez, Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

Office of Graduate Studies, Research, and International Programs  
University Hall 265  
(818) 677-2138

*[www.csun.edu/graduatestudies](http://www.csun.edu/graduatestudies)*

Follow links on this website for graduate students for more information about rules, deadlines, forms, graduate scholarships and awards, and workshops and events.

Follow links for research for information concerning human subjects review, protocols and forms, and applying for research grants.

### **Admissions and Records**

Student Services Building, First Floor  
(818) 677-3700

**Financial Aid (need-based programs as well as some scholarships)**

Student Services Building, Room 130  
(818) 677-3000

**Career Center**

University Hall, Room 105  
(818) 677-2878

**University Counseling Services**

Student Services Building Room 520

Adult Reentry Program: (818) 677-5552

Crisis Counseling, Group Counseling, Personal and Psychological Counseling (818) 677-2366

**Oviatt Library**

Information (818) 677-2285

Mr. Michael Barrett, Sociology's reference librarian (818) 677-2277

**Matadors Bookstore**

(818) 677-2932

Offers books and supplies, graduation announcements, graduation regalia

**Klotz Student Health Center**

(818) 677-3666

**Students with Disabilities Resources**

Student Services Building Room 110

(818) 677-2684

**General CSUN Information**

(818) 677-1200

Sociology Department Faculty

California State University Northridge  
2013

Scott Appelrouth	PhD, 2000, New York University	Theory, Cultural Sociology, Social Change
Karren Baird-Olson	PhD, 1994, New Mexico	Criminology/Delinquency, Race/Ethnic/Minority Relations
James David Ballard	PhD, 2002, Nevada-Las Vegas	Quantitative Methodology, Criminology, Terrorism
David Boyns	PhD, 2004, California – Riverside	Theory, Social Psychology, Cultural Sociology, Emotions, Media
Lori Campbell	PhD, 2007, The Ohio State University	Social Stratification, Wealth Inequality, Education, Racial-Ethnic Inequality
Moshoula Capous-Desyllas	PhD, 2012, Portland State University	Feminist and queer theory, arts-based research, art as activism, visual sociology, qualitative methods, anti-oppression, social justice, sex work, immigration
Michael Carter	PhD, 2010, California – Riverside	Social Psychology, Research Methods, Statistics, Sociological Theory, Self and Identity, Group Processes, Sociology of Emotions, Morality, Institutions
Herman DeBose	PhD, 1993, California-Los Angeles	Social Welfare, Alcohol and Drugs
Amy Denissen	PhD, 2006, California-Los Angeles	Gender, Social Psychology, Qualitative Methodology, and Work
Laura Desfor-Edles	PhD, 1990, California-Los Angeles	Cultural Sociology, Theory, Political Sociology
Alexandra Gerbasi	PhD, 2007, Stanford	Methodology, Social Psychology, Networks, Group Processes
Ellis Godard	PhD, 2004, Virginia	Quantitative Methodology, Social Control, Statistics
Vickie Jensen	PhD, 1997, Colorado-Boulder	Criminology/Delinquency, Penology/Corrections, Race/Class/Gender
David Lopez	PhD, 1996, Michigan State	Latina/o Sociology, Cultural Sociology, Criminal Justice
Lauren McDonald	PhD, 2008, CUNY Graduate Center	Quantitative Methodology, Education
Karen Morgaine	PhD, 2007, Portland State University	Social Movements, Social Justice, LGBTQ, Privilege/Race/Racism, Qualitative Research, Human Rights, Domestic Violence.
Kay Pih	PhD, 2004, California – Riverside	Criminology, Race/Ethnic Relations
Ana Prata	PhD, 2007, Minnesota	Theory, Globalization, Political Sociology, Social Movements
Jeong-Hee Ryu	Ph D, 2012, Madison-Wisconsin	food insecurity, children's health and developmental, social welfare/social justice.
Jerald Schutte	PhD, 1974, California-Los Angeles	Quantitative Methodology
Victor Shaw	PhD, 1994, Hawaii-Manoa	Criminology/Delinquency, Organizations-Formal/Complex, Comparative/Historical Sociology
Wen Chang Wang	PhD, 1993, California-Los Angeles	Quantitative Methodology, Race/Ethnic/Minority Relations, Stratification/Mobility
Loretta Winters	PhD, 1994, California-Riverside	Quantitative Methodology, Environmental Sociology, Race Ethnic/Minority

## Program Planning Form

Prerequisites (if any)	Semester Completed/To Be Completed
SOC 364/L, Social Statistics	_____
SOC 497/L, Research Methods	_____
SOC 368/S, Classical Theory	_____
SOC 468/S, Contemporary Theory	_____
Additional courses in sociology or other courses	_____
Upper division writing exam	_____
File for classification	_____
<b>Core courses</b>	
SOC 601 Sociological Theory in Historical Perspective	_____
SOC 670 Studies in Contemporary Sociology	_____
SOC 691 Advanced Social Research Techniques (Qualitative Methods)	_____
SOC 690 Social Research (should take SOC 680 first)	_____
<b>Sociological Specialization</b>	
SOC _____	_____
SOC _____	_____
SOC _____	_____
SOC _____	_____
<b>Electives</b>	
SOC _____	_____
SOC _____	_____
<b>Comprehensive Exam or Thesis</b>	
SOC 697 (comp. exams) or 698 (thesis)	_____
Take comprehensive exams or do thesis defense	_____

## The MA Program in Sociology: Acceptable Courses and Policies

### *Acceptable Courses:*

- Sociology 500 and 600 numbered courses, provided prerequisites are met
- Up to **six** units of Independent Study, SOC 699
- Up to **nine** units of 400-level courses with additional work and approval on file
- Three to six units of courses outside the Department of Sociology **only with prior consultation and approval from Graduate Coordinator or Chair**

### *Unacceptable Courses:*

- Sociology courses numbered 100, 200, or 300.
- Undergraduate core classes for prerequisites including SOC 364/L, SOC 368/S, SOC 468/S, and SOC 497/L. This also pertains to any other prerequisite courses required for classification.
- Independent Study, SOC 499 (The student should enroll in 699 instead.)
- Field study, Practice, or Practicum courses: SOC 472, Proseminar in Social Welfare Practice; SOC 475AEE/BEE, Supervised Field Instruction I and II; SOC 482SOC or 483, Practicum in Counseling and Guidance: Work Settings; SOC 486SOC, Social Science Career Internship; SOC 498 AEE, BEE, or CEE, Field Study and Reports; SOC 498S, Seminar in Field Study and Reports.

### *Important Policies:*

- The Department of Sociology **does not** approve course repeats for graduate students except under the most extreme circumstances.
- Any 400-level course that can carry graduate credit requires additional work on the part of the graduate student and a completed and approved 400-level form on file in order to be applied to the formal program.
- SOC 697 or SOC 698 permission numbers will be given only after the student's GPA and coursework completion have been verified.

**Graduate Course Approval for 400-level Courses**

Student Name:

File Number:

Course:

Semester:

Instructor Name:

What is the material to be covered in this course? Please summarize and attach a copy of the syllabus.

In order for this class to be considered a graduate class for the formal program the graduate student must do additional work in order to provide advanced instruction in the subject area. What additional work is required of the graduate student for graduate credit? How will this work be assessed?

Instructor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Request is  Approved as is Explanation:

Approved with modifications

Denied



*\*\*\* Instructor, Student and Graduate Program are asked to keep a copy of this form for their records.*

### **Intent to Take Comprehensive Exams**

Student:

File Number:

Semester:

Specialty Area:

I give notice that I intend to take the comprehensive examinations for the MA in Sociology this semester. I understand and meet all the requirements for taking the exam, including being enrolled in SOC 697 this semester or having received an SP for the course in a previous semester. I am aware that the department recommends completing a pre-comps conference with the graduate coordinator in the first two months of the semester. Additionally, I am aware the comprehensive exams, as a "culminating experience," will include the full areas of theory, methods, and my specialty area and will include material above and beyond the actual course material in those areas. I have been advised to contact committee members in the three areas for the best information on what may be included in the exams.

---

Signature

---

Printed Name

---

Current Address, Telephone number, and E-mail

---

Date

---

Specialty Exam Area

# A Guide to Help You Prepare for Your Comprehensive Examinations

## Prior to the Examination:

1. Make sure you know explicitly what you are getting into:
  - a. Know when the exam is scheduled.
  - b. Know the structure of the exam.
  - c. Know the committee members for you exam areas.
  - d. Meet with the chairs of each committee and (if possible) with each of the other members of each committee.
  - e. Know the criteria for evaluation of the exam.
  - f. Obtain and review copies of prior exams in your area.
  - g. Talk to other graduate students who have taken the exams.
  - h. Get answers about the exams early in the process.
2. Discuss with exam area committees:
  - a. A reading list in your area. You should prepare this for each area.
  - b. The specific structure of the exam.
  - c. Topics/sub-areas that will be included in the exam.
3. Practice examination questions:
  - a. Take mock exams – answer mock questions, place yourself in a setting that resembles the environment in which you will take the exam.
  - b. Use a practice comp as a means of finding out what you need to make your comp successful, especially learning what works best for you personally.
  - c. Make outlines of responses to exam questions.
4. Form a study group with other students.
  - a. Meet regularly.
  - b. Share study materials.
  - c. Draft sample answers and share them for critical review.
5. Create a timeline or breakdown of your study strategy for the semester preceding your comprehensive examination. Ideally, your preparation should begin during your coursework!  
Make note of:
  - a. Your reading schedule.
  - b. Your schedule for compiling study materials.
  - c. Your schedule for drafting sample answers.
6. Compiling study materials:
  - a. Notes.
  - b. Articles and books.
  - c. Chapter summaries, book reviews, review essays, textbooks/secondary source material.



## **The In-Class Examination:**

1. The exam will be taken on computers at the university. If laptops are used you may choose to bring your own keyboard or request one in advance.
2. Bring a snack and something to drink.
3. Travel light as all personal materials will have to be set aside during the exam. This includes communication technologies like computers and cell phones.
4. You will be provided with paper and writing material as well as flash-drives on which you can save your work.
5. Have a game plan outlined in advanced and get to work immediately.
  - a. If your exam asks you to answer three questions make sure you allocate enough, or equal, time to answer each question.
  - b. Spend roughly equal time on each question. Make a plan and stick to it. Time management is essential.
  - c. Make sure you understand the meaning of the questions you choose to answer. Be sure to answer all parts of each question.
  - d. If necessary quickly outline your essays before you begin.
6. Write your essays in clear and organized sections. Writing to subheadings can help to facilitate this.
7. Write in complete sentences and full paragraphs.
8. Make reference to primary source material when appropriate.
9. Begin your essays with an introductory paragraph and end them with a conclusion
10. Allow time (10-15 minutes) for editing and review.
11. A fair answer shows that you know the relevant material. A great answer does that as well as demonstrating some creative new thinking on your part.
12. Most answers to individual comprehensive exam questions are 4+ pages in length.

## **The Take-Home Exam:**

1. Make sure to have all of your materials assembled in advance of receiving your comprehensive exam questions:
  - a. Have all your books and articles on hand and organized so that you have quick and easy access to them during the examination period.
  - b. Make sure your notes are organized, just like the books and articles.
  - c. Work up some draft outlines or draft text on key topics and issues in advance of the comprehensive exam.
  - d. Make sure you have a new printer ribbon or ink cartridge for your printer AND that you will have access to email to receive and/or submit the exam.
  - e. Plan out a writing strategy. Know what will be expected of you in advance in terms of what is on the test, and plan how much time you will spend on each section of the exam.
2. Take intermittent breaks and keep your energy level high. Get enough sleep!
3. Follow directions! Answer all parts of the questions!!
4. Structure your answers clearly. Outlining is strongly recommended.

5. Properly cite your references in ASA format.
6. Proofread the final drafts for content, spelling and grammar.

### **Evaluation of Examinations:**

Each committee may develop unique criteria for evaluating comprehensive exams in specific areas. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these criteria. Evaluation criteria will include:

1. The conciseness, organization, and clarity of written expression.
2. Evidence of comprehension of key ideas, concepts, and traditions of thought.
3. Evidence of breadth and/or depth of knowledge in pertinent areas.
4. Ability to make connections across traditions of thought.
5. The ability to apply and integrate ideas in a synthetic manner.
6. Creativity and originality of interpretation and thought.

### **Understanding your Outcomes:**

Each committee may have specific rubrics used in the evaluation of exams. These rubrics may include evaluation scales like: High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, No Pass.

1. Students who pass in all three examination areas are awarded a “pass” on their overall exam.
2. Students who do not pass in one or more areas are awarded a “fail” on their overall exam.
3. Additional means may be used to determine overall exam outcomes, as determined by the examination committee
4. Students should know the results of their exams within two weeks of the submission of their final area exam.
5. Students should let the Graduate Coordinator know how they would like to be contacted regarding their results – email, phone, voicemail, etc.

## Sample Study Materials for the MA Comprehensive Exams in Sociology

Sample study materials are provided to guide students in preparation for the MA comprehensive exams. Topics and bibliographies are provided here for theory, methods, and several substantive areas. These materials are presented to assist in study and planning. **Be aware that these materials may be under revision by faculty so it is extremely important that you consult with those faculty for the most current topics and bibliography list.** For any area not included in this handbook, please see the graduate coordinator for a list of faculty who teach in that area.

These study materials include topics lists and/or bibliographies to give students a guideline for preparation for the comprehensive exams. However, it is crucial for the student to consult with the faculty who comprise the comprehensive exam committee concerning particular areas of focus, suggested readings not on the list, and other information that will assist in preparation. **It is highly recommended that the student work with the faculty on how to write the answer, using past exams as guides if necessary.** The need for consultation is important for all areas: theory, methods, and specialty exams.

*Just a reminder: the comprehensive exams are given once per semester. Students must verify that they qualify to take the exam with the coordinator and submit their intent to take comprehensive exams. Additionally, students must enroll in SOC 697. For many exams, primary sources are required and using solely secondary sources is not acceptable. **For all exams, University definitions and standards regarding academic honesty and plagiarism will be rigidly enforced.***

*Please refer to the handbook for a more thorough overview of guidelines and rules concerning comprehensive exams. However, in short, remember this: a student has two opportunities to pass the ENTIRE exam. If the student fails the entire exam twice, he/she cannot receive the MA degree. In any one test, two or three failed sections constitute an entire fail leaving one more chance to pass the entire exam. The examining committee makes a decision as to what is required for one failing exam. These options can include any means the committee needs to use to assess the student's knowledge. At the worst, the student will be required to retake the failed exam (theory, methods, or substantive) at the next test.*

## **Study Materials for the Methods Comprehensive Exam**

### **General structure of the exam:**

The methods exam is generally comprised of three sections of material. One section includes integrative questions. These questions will ask the student to apply several aspects of his/her knowledge toward a research question. For example, you may be asked about a specific aspect of crime in the city of Northridge. If the police department came to you and asked to find out about community attitudes toward community based policing, how would you investigate this most effectively and why?

The second kind of questions are qualitative questions. This section will give you several questions specifically requiring knowledge of qualitative approaches to sociological research, which you should have encountered from the SOC 691A course. The range of topics is moderately large including (but not necessarily limited to) participant observational studies, qualitative archival studies, qualitative content analysis, and in-depth interviewing. Be aware that some of these approaches may also be amenable to quantitative analysis.

The third kind of questions on the exam are quantitative questions, including questions concerning sociology as a paradigm. Questions will be drawn from the whole range of methodological questions, approaches, and problems given in an overview in the typical graduate level secondary text. These questions be the contrast and compare type or may simply ask for information about the methodology and how you would carry it out.

Note: The methods exam will draw heavily from your courses, but the content of the courses will not be the sole material covered on the exam. More in-depth knowledge is needed. You are expected to know the area, not what is specifically in the text you used or what your instructor might or might not have said. Having said that, it is also emphasized that it is your overall profile that is important, not your knowledge for one specific area seen on one test question.

### **Specific Study Areas and Bibliographies for the Methods Exam**

This list is divided into quantitative and qualitative methods. For each general category of methods, there will be three categories: topics, secondary sources or core sources, and primary sources. The topics list provides a very rough overview of the kinds of material you should be studying. Secondary sources are meant to give an overview of the field of methods while primary sources deal with issues regarding the philosophy of science, particular methods and methodological issues, and analysis techniques. A student studying for the comprehensive exam in methods should consult MORE than one secondary source for the overview and basic ideas in methods. Primary sources need to be consulted for additional material which will explain, supplement, or otherwise extend the more general discussion in the secondary sources. Primary sources may be method specific or may serve as empirical examples of a particular methodological issue. These lists are meant to give you guidance and an overall coverage of what is important in methods. The list is not exhaustive, and additional sources not listed here may be helpful to you as well. Please remember that the methods committee is available for additional questions and suggestions as you are preparing.

## **Quantitative/General Methods:**

### ***Topics:***

Sociology as a science--concept of paradigms in sociology of knowledge approach to understanding, including what is science and how it functions as a process  
Causality  
Sampling techniques  
Measurement  
Scales and indexes  
Questionnaire construction  
Reliability and validity in design and measurement  
Quantitative data collection techniques  
Experiments  
Surveys  
Secondary and unobtrusive measures (including content analysis, secondary data, and the like)  
Elaboration model  
Multivariate analysis--not in-depth, but show some acquaintance with approaches such as multiple regression, factor analysis, and path analysis.  
Political and Ethical Issues  
Rights of Human Subjects

### ***Recommended Secondary Sources for Quantitative and General Methods:***

Neuman, William Lawrence. *Social Research Methods*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.  
Jones, Russell A. 1995. *Research Methods in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Sinauer Associates.  
Diem, Gordon. 1997. *Social Science Research Methods*. Redding: CAT Publishing Company.  
Simon, Julian L. and Paul Burstein. 1985. *Basic Research Methods in Social Science*. New York: Random House.  
Dantzik, M.L. and Ronald D. Hunter. 2000. *Research Methods*. Woburn: Butterworth-Heinemann.  
McNeill, Patrick. 1990. *Research Methods*. New York: Routledge.  
Dooley, David. 1994. *Social Research Methods*. Paramus: Prentice-Hall.

### ***Primary Sources for Scientific Paradigm Discussion, Feminist Paradigms, and Measurement***

Kuhn, Thomas. 1996. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
Ritzer, George. 1975. *Sociology: A Multiple Paradigm Science*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.  
Harding, Sandra. 1991. *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.  
Reinharz, Shulamit. 1992. *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.  
Cicourel, Aaron. 1964. *Method and Measurement in Sociology*. New York: The Free Press.



Schuman, Howard and Stanley Presser. 1981. *Questions and Answers in Attitude Surveys. Experiments in Question Form, Wording, and Context*. New York: Academic Press.

### ***Sources Concerning Specific Quantitative Research Methods***

Babbie, Earl. 1990 (or most recent edition). *Survey Research Methods*. Belmont: Wadsworth.  
Marsh, Catherine. 1982. *The Survey Method: The Contribution of Surveys to Sociological Explanation*. Boston: George Allen and Unwin.  
Fowler, Floyd J., Jr. 1993. *Survey Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.  
Campbell, Donald and Julian Stanley. 1963/1981. *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*. Chicago: Rand McNally.  
Webb, Eugene, Donald .T. Campbell, Richard .D. Schwartz, Lee Sechrest, and Janet Belew Gove. 1981. *Nonreactive Measures in the Social Sciences*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.  
Stewart, David. 1984. *Secondary Research: Information Sources and Methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

### ***Sources Concerning Data Analysis***

Any general, upper division, social sciences statistics book.  
Allison. *A Primer in Multiple Regression*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge.

### ***Ethical Issues in Social Research***

Milgram, Stanley. 1974. *Obedience to Authority*. New York: Harper and Row.  
Humphreys, Laud. 1975. *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Chicago: Aldine.

### **Qualitative Methods**

#### ***Topics:***

Primary Foci of the Field:

Understand the origin and premises of qualitative research and field work methods  
Contrast and compare qualitative and quantitative methods, including comprehending the pitfalls as well as advantages of qualitative methods  
Comprehend the advantages and disadvantages of each technique  
Understand how triangulation may be used to improve research involving qualitative data  
Understand ethical issues and rights of human subjects as applied to qualitative research

Typical Qualitative Methods:

Systematic and non-systematic observation  
Participant observation  
In-depth interviewing  
Discourse analysis/semiotics  
Content analysis

Historical methods  
Unobtrusive  
Case studies  
Evaluation research  
Focus groups  
Visual methods  
Oral history/life history

***Recommended Secondary Sources, Edited Readings, and other Major Texts in Qualitative Methods***

Lofland, John and Lyn Lofland. 1995. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observations and Research*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Berg, Bruce. 1998. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Schatzman, Leonard and Anselm Strauss. 1973. *Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Taylor, Steven and Bogdan. *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods*. J. Wiley and Sons.

Williamson, John B., David Karp, John Dalphin, and Paul Gray. 1982. *The Research Craft: An Introduction to Social Research Methods*. Boston: Little and Brown.

Reinharz, Shulamit. 1992. *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Morse, Janice and Peggy A. Field. 1995. *Qualitative Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Emerson, Robert (editor). 1983. *Contemporary Field Research*. Boston: Little and Brown.

McCall, George and J.L. Simmons (editors). 1969. *Issues in Participant Observation*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Glaser, Barney and Anselm Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago: Aldine.

Strauss, Anselm and Juliet Corbin. 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Buroway, Michael (editor). 1991. *Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Garfinkel, Harold. 1967. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Edles, Laura. 2002. *Cultural Sociology in Practice*.

***Classics in Qualitative Methods***

Becker, Howard. 1982. *Art Worlds*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bellah, Robert et. al. 1985. *Habits of the Heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Humphreys, Laud. 1970. *Tearoom Trade*. Chicago: Aldine.

Liebow, Elliott. 1967. *Tally's Corner*. Boston: Little and Brown.

Radway, Janice. 1987. *Reading the Romance*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Thompson, E.P. 1978. *The Making of the Working Class*. New York: Random House.

Whyte, William Foote. 1943. *Streetcorner Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Wieder, D. Lawrence. 1974. *Language and Social Reality: The Case of Telling the Convict Code*. The Hague: Mouton.

### ***Exemplary Books and Articles***

- Liebow, Elliott. 1993. *Tell Them Who I Am*. New York: Penguin.
- Leidner, Robin. 1993. *Fast Food, Fast Talk*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Clark-Lewis, Elizabeth. 1994. *Living In, Living Out: African American Domesticity in Washington, D.C. 1910-1940*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian.
- Quinn, Olive Westbrooke. 1954. "Transmission of Racial Attitudes Among White Southerners." Unpublished paper.
- Weitz, Rose. 1992. *Life With AIDS*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University.
- Schmidt, Leigh Eric. 1995. *Consumer Rites*. Princeton: Princeton University.
- Schwartz, Barry and Todd Bayma. 1999. "Commemoration and the Politics of Recognition: The Korean War Veterans Memorial." *American Behavioral Scientist*. 42 (6): 946-967.
- Wagner-Pacifizi, Robin and Barry Schwartz. 1991. "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past." *American Journal of Sociology*. 97: 376-420.
- Binder, Amy. 1993. "Constructing Racial Rhetoric: Media Depictions of Harm in Heavy Metal and Rap Music." *American Sociological Review*. 58: 753-767.
- Hayes, Sharon. 1996. *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hunt, Darnell. 1999. *O.J. Simpson Facts and Fictions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Liebes, Tamar and Elihu Katz. 1990. *The Export of Meaning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shively, JoEllen. 1992. "Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films among American Indians and Anglos." *American Sociological Review*. 57: 725-734.
- Gibson, James William. 1994. *Warrior Dreams: Violence and Manhood in Post-Vietnam America*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Duneier, Mitch. 1999. *Sidewalk*.

## Theory Bibliography: Primary Sources and Interpretive Essays (IE)

What follows is a bibliography of readings to assist in the comprehensive exam for theory. In addition to having good familiarity with these works and the schools of thought they represent, the student is expected to be able to address the nature of theory itself: What is theory? What is its mechanics, structure, and relation to doing sociology? What are the components of theory, and how do they relate to each other? Learning the theorists per se is not enough. **To be successful in theory, a student must go beyond simple recall.** This includes (but not limited to) critical assessment, application, extension, cross-theory comparisons, and other more depth kinds of considerations. Work closely with the theory faculty in and out of class to ensure that you develop these crucial skills.

Durkheim, Emile: *Rules of the Sociological Method; Elementary Forms of Religious Life; Suicide; Selected Readings* (Anthony Giddens, ed.)

Marx, Karl: *Capital, Philosophic Manuscripts* (selections)  
Giddens, Anthony. *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory* (IE)  
Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader* (Robert Tucker, ed.)  
Lukacs, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness*

Weber, Max: *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism; Economy and Society; From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds.)  
Bendix, Reinhard. *Max Weber* (IE); *Nation Building and Citizenship* (IE)

Simmel, Georg: *Conflict; The Web of Group Affiliations; Sociology of Georg Simmel; On Individual and Social Forms* (Donald Levine, ed.)

Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*

Thomas, William and Znaniecki, Florian. *The Polish Peasant*

Sorokin, Pitirim. *Social and Cultural Dynamics; Society, Culture and Personality; Ways and Power of Love*

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. *Women and Economics*

Dahrendorf, Ralf. *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society.*  
Coser, Lewis. *Functions of Social Conflict*  
Collins, Randall. *Conflict Sociology*

Parsons, Talcott. *The Social System: The Evolution of Societies*  
Merton, Robert. *Social Theory and Social Structure*  
Blau, Peter. *Exchange and Power in Social Life*

Mead, George Herbert. *On Social Psychology* (Anselm Strauss, ed.)  
Blumer, Herbert. *Symbolic Interactionism*  
Goffman, Erving. *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life; Frame Analysis; The Goffman Reader*  
(Lemert and Branaman, eds.)  
Garfinkel, Harold. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*

Chafetz, Janet. *Feminist Sociology*  
Chodorow, Nancy. *The Reproduction of Mothering*  
Smith, Dorothy. *The Everyday World as Problematic*  
Giddens, Anthony. *The Constitution of Society; Central Problems in Social Theory*  
Bourdieu, Pierre. *Practical Reason; The Logic of Practice; Distinction*  
Habermas, Jurgen. *Theory of Communicative Action; Jurgen Habermas on Society and Politics*  
(Steven Seidman, ed.)  
Foucault, Michel. *The Foucault Reader* (Paul Rabinow, ed.)  
Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition*  
Beck, Ulrich. *Risk Society; Reflexive Modernization* (IE)  
Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The Modern World-System*  
Baudrillard, Jean. *Selected Writings*

Alexander, Jeffrey. *Twenty Lectures* (IE); *Fin de Siecle Social Theory* (IE)  
Giddens, Anthony and Jonathan Turner, eds. *Social Theory Today* (IE)  
Kellner, Douglas and Steve Best. *Postmodern Theory*  
Lemert, Charles. *Postmodernism is Not What You Think*  
Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*  
Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional Man*

## Additional Suggested Readings in Theory

### Functionalism

Davis and Moore – “Some Principles of Stratification”  
Parsons – “The Position of Sociological Theory”  
Parsons – “Pattern Variables Revisited”  
Merton – “Social Structure and Anomie”  
Coser – “Some Functions of Deviant Behavior and Normative Flexibility”  
Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*  
Talcott Parsons, *The Social System*  
Talcott Parsons, *The System of Modern Societies*  
Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils, *Toward a General Theory of Action*  
Robert Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*  
Jonathan Turner and Alexandra Maryanski, *Functionalism*

### Conflict Theory

Dahrendorf – *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (selections)  
Mills – *The Power Elite*  
Collins – “Three Faces of Cruelty”  
Collins – *Conflict Sociology*  
Burawoy and Wright – “Sociological Marxism”

### World-Systems and Historical-Comparative Theory

Wallerstein – “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System”  
Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*  
Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750*  
Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730-1840*  
Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*  
Chase-Dunn – “World-Systems Theorizing”  
Chase-Dunn and Grimes – “World-Systems Analysis”

### Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology

Berger and Luckmann – *Social Construction of Reality*  
Garfinkel – “Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies”  
Garfinkel – *Studies in Ethnomethodology*  
John Heritage, *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*  
Hugh Mehan and Houston Wood, *The Reality of Ethnomethodology*

### Dramaturgy

Goffman – *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*  
Goffman – “Embarrassment and Social Organization”  
Goffman – “The Nature of Deference and Demeanor”

Hochschild – “Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure”

### **Symbolic Interactionism**

Blumer – “Mead and Blumer”

Stryker and Burke – “The Past, Present and Future of an Identity Theory”

Burke – “Identity and Social Stress”

Fine – “The Sad Demise, Mysterious Disappearance, and Glorious Triumph of Symbolic Interactionism”

Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*

Sheldon Stryker, *Symbolic Interactionism: A Social Structural Version*

### **Interaction Ritual Chains**

Collins – “On The Microfoundations of Macrosociology”

Collins – *Interaction Ritual Chains*

### **Exchange, Network and Rational Choice Theories**

George Homans, *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*

Peter Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life*

George Homans, “Behaviorism and After,” in Anthony Giddens and Jonathan Turner, *Social Theory Today*

Karen Cook and Eric Rice, “Exchange and Power,” in Jonathan Turner, *Handbook of Sociological Theory*

Richard Emerson, “Power-Dependence Relations,” in *American Sociological Review*

Edward Lawler and Jeongkoon Yoon, “Power and the Emergence of Commitment Behavior in Negotiated Exchange,” in *American Sociological Review*

Edward Lawler and Jeongkoon Yoon, “Commitment in Exchange Relations: A Test of Theory of Relational Cohesion,” in *American Sociological Review*

Theodore Kemper and Randall Collins, “Dimensions of Microinteractionism,” in *American Journal of Sociology*

Karen Cook and Richard Emerson, “Power, Equity, and Commitment in Exchange Networks,” in *American Sociological Review*

Willard Waller, “The Rating and Dating Complex,” in *American Sociological Review*

Ronald Burt, *Theory a Structural Theory of Action: Network Models of Social Structure, Perception and Action*

Mark Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties,” in *American Journal of Sociology*

Barry Wellman, “Network Analysis: Some Basic Principles,” in *Sociological Theory*.

Michael Hechter, *Principles of Group Solidarity*

James Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*

### **European Synthesis**

Pierre Bourdieu – *Distinction*

Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*

Bourdieu – “Social Space and Symbolic Power”

Habermas – *Legitimation Crisis*

Habermas – *Theory of Communicative Action*

Giddens – *The Constitution of Society*

### **Frankfurt School of Critical Theory**

Horkheimer and Adorno – “Culture Industry as Mass Deception”

Marcuse – *One Dimensional Man*

Kellner – “Critical Theory Today”

Benjamin – “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”

Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*

Antonio Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks*

### **Contemporary Critiques of Modernity**

Ritzer – McDonaldization of Society

Giddens – *Consequences of Modernity*

Giddens – *Modernity and Self-Identity* (selections)

### **Feminist Theory**

Chafetz – “Feminist Theory and Sociology”

Garcia – “The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse”

Dorothy Smith, *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*

Janet Saltzman Chafetz, *Feminist Sociology: An Overview of Contemporary Theories*

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*

Judith Lorber, *Paradoxes of Gender*

Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*

Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and Empowerment*

Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*

Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*

Paula England, *Theory on Gender/Feminism on Theory*

### **Poststructuralism**

Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*

Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*

Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiotics*

Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*

Jacques Derrida, *On Grammatology*

### **Postmodern Social Theory**

Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*

Jean Baudrillard, *The Ecstasy of Communication*

Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities*

Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*

Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*

Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*

David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Inquiry into Cultural Change*

Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity*



Norman Denzin, *Images of Postmodern Society*  
Kenneth Gergen, *The Saturated Self*  
Michael Featherstone, *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*  
Stephen Crook, Jan Pakulski, and Malcolm Waters, *Postmodernization: Change in Advanced Society*  
Mark Gottdiener, "Hegemony and Mass Culture," in *American Journal of Sociology*  
Stephen Seidman, "The End of Sociological Theory: The Postmodern Hope," in *Sociological Theory*  
Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," in *New Left Review*  
Richard Harvey Brown, "Rhetoric, Textuality, and the Postmodern Turn in Sociological Theory," in *Sociological Theory*

## **Study Material for the Criminology Comprehensive Exam**

Provided here are representative materials from each of the major areas in criminology and criminal justice that represent a comprehensive understanding of the field. This list will provide a starting point for your reading and familiarity with these areas. As this is a sample of key works in criminology, additional reading is recommended for the fullest understanding. This particularly applies to more recent development of theory and research that would be found in the latest journals. Additionally, this list represents criminological works that are sociological or social psychological. Biological and purely psychological readings are not represented here, although in the broader interdisciplinary field of criminology they are areas with importance to the understanding of crime and criminal justice.

**Please be aware that this bibliography is currently undergoing revision and that students are urged to contact the criminology committee or graduate coordinator for official updates to this list. The current list will give you a guide but not an absolute final statement for studying graduate level criminology.**

## **Selected References for Criminology Comprehensive Exam Preparation**

Department of Sociology, California State University, Northridge

### **THEORY**

#### **General**

- Akers, R. L. 1997. *Criminological Theories: Introduction and Evaluation*. Los Angeles: Roxbury.
- Cordella, Peter and Larry Siegel. *Readings in Contemporary Criminological Theory*
- Cullen, Francis and Robert Agnew. *Criminological Theory: Past to Present*
- Curran, D. J. & C. M. Renzetti. 2001. *Theories of Crime, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Einstadter, W. & S. Henry. 1995. *Criminological Theory: An Analysis of Its Underlying Assumptions*. Ft. Worth: Harcourt Brace.
- Vold, G. B. & T. J. Bernard. 1986. *Theoretical Criminology, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* New York: Oxford University Press.

#### **Classical, Rational Choice & Routine Activities**

- Beccaria, C. 1963/1764. *On Crimes and Punishments*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril.
- Cohen, L. E. & M. Felson. 1979. "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activities Approach." *American Sociological Review* 44: 588-608.
- Messner, S. F. & K. Tardiff. 1985. "The Social Ecology of Urban Homicide: An Application of the 'Routine Activities' Approach." *Criminology* 23: 241-268.
- Paternoster, R. 1989. "Decisions to Participate and Desist from Four Types of Common Delinquency: Deterrence and the Rational Choice Perspective." *Law and Society Review* 17: 457-479
- Sherman, L. W., P. R. Gartin & M. D. Buerger. 1989. "Hot Spots of Predatory Crime: Routine Activities and the Criminology of Place." *Criminology* 27: 27-56.

#### **Control Theory**

- Hirschi, Travis. 1969. *Causes of Delinquency*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gottfriedson, Michael and Travis Hirschi. 1990. *A General Theory of Crime*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

(note: there are other directions of control theory, other than those represented here)

#### **Social Disorganization / Ecological**

Bursik, Jr., Robert. J. 1984. "Urban Dynamics and Ecological Studies of Delinquency." *Social Forces* 63: 393-413.

Bursik, Jr., Robert and Harold Grasmick. *Neighborhoods and Crime: The Dimensions of Effective Community Control*. New York: Lexington Books

Sampson, R. J. & W. B. Groves. 1989. "Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social Disorganization Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 774-802.

Shaw, C. R. & H. D. McKay. 1969. *Juvenile Delinquency in Urban Areas, revised ed.* Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Skogan, W. G. 1990. *Disorder and Community Decline: Crime and the Spiral of Decay in American Neighborhoods*. New York: Free Press.

### **Strain / Anomie / Opportunity**

Agnew, R. 1992. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency." *Criminology* 30: 47-87.

Agnew, R. & H. R. White. 1992. "An Empirical Test of General Strain Theory." *Criminology* 30: 475-499.

Clinard, M. B., ed. 1964. *Anomie and Deviant Behavior*. New York: Free Press.

Cloward, R. A. & L. E. Ohlin. 1960. *Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Cohen, A. K. 1955. *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*. New York: Free Press.

Cullen, F. T. 1988. "Were Cloward and Ohlin Strain Theorists? Delinquency and Opportunity Revisited." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 25: 214-241.

Mazerolle, P. & A. Piquero. 1997. "Violent Responses to Strain: An Examination of Conditioning Influences." *Violence and Victims* 12: 3-24.

Merton, R. K. 1975. *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Messner, S. F. & R. Rosenfeld. 1994. *Crime and the American Dream*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

### **Drift / Neutralization**

Matza, D. 1964. *Delinquency and Drift*. New York: Wiley.

Minor, M. W. 1981. "Techniques of Neutralization: A Reconceptualization and Empirical Examination." *Journal of research in Crime and Delinquency* 18: 295-318.

Sykes, G. M. & D. Matza. 1957. "Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency." *American Sociological Review* 22:664-670.

### **Differential Association / Social Learning**

Akers, R. L. 1998. *Social Learning and Social Structure: A General Theory of Crime and Deviance*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Akers, R. L. 1996. "Is Differential Association/Social Learning Cultural Deviance Theory?" *Criminology* 34(2): 229-247.

Burgess, R. & R. Akers. 1966. "A Differential Association Reinforcement Theory of Criminal Behavior." *Social Problems* 14: 128-147.

Cressey, D. R. 1960. "The Theory of Differential Association: An Introduction." *Social Problems* 8: 2-6.

Glaser, D. 1960. "Differential Association and Criminological Prediction." *Social Problems* 8: 6-14.

Matsueda, R. L. 1988. "The Current State of Differential Association Theory." *Crime and Delinquency* 34: 277-306.

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## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

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Cochran, J. K., M. B. Chamlin & M. Seth. 1994. "Deterrence or Brutalization? An Impact Assessment of Oklahoma's Return to Capital Punishment." *Criminology* 32: 107-134.

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Sykes, Gresham. 1958. *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

### **Policing**

Dunham, R. G. & G. P. Alpert, eds. 1997. *Critical Issues in Policing, 3rd ed.* Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, Inc.

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## **Sociology Comprehensive Exam Review Materials: Sociology of Gender**

These review materials assume the student has had a graduate course in Sociology of Gender and/or independent reading courses in gender.

Typical description of the field: At the graduate level, the study of gender emphasizes how sociological theorists perceive (or ignore) sex and gender issues and how feminist and masculinist theorists delineate and analyze gender. Gender developed from two analytical frameworks: (1) the emphasis upon women's lives and experiences which were large ignored and distorted in traditional sociological knowledge and (2) the recognition of gender and gender relations as a central category of analysis impacting men's and women's lives. Understanding gender and sex roles incorporates understanding of biological, psychological, anthropological, and sociological influences.

Important sociological theoretical perspectives on gender:

Review the "masters" of sociology for their direct or indirect reflections on gender, women, roles of men and women

See Comte, Durkheim, Marx, Webers (Max and Marianne), Parsons

Mead, Goffman

Review post modernism and feminist theories especially Foucault and Dorothy Smith

Important feminist sociological sources:

Connell, R. W. *Masculinities*, 1995

England, Paula *Theory on Gender, Feminism on Theory*, 1993

Basic issues to know:

Difference between sex and gender, sexual orientation, transgender

Theories of gender, sexual identification ( Freud, Chodorow, Gilligan, Kohlberg, Bandura, Bem)

Socialization for gender--multi- and cross-cultural perspectives

Sex and Temperament (M. Mead)

Berdache (Roscoe)

Feminist critique of sociological theory, methods, and science

History of American and international feminist movements

Understand of contemporary men's movements

Contrast/compare women and men's issues in various areas such as:

education, employment, communication, crime, violence, popular culture, medicine and health, government, military, politics

Typical texts (undergraduate, are good for review)

Carroll, Janell and Paul Wolpe *Sexuality and Gender in Society*

Doyle, James and Michele Paludi *Sex and Gender*

Renzetti, Claire and Daniel Curran *Women, Men and Society*

Kimmel, Michael and Michael Messner *Men's Lives*

Current major researchers in the sociology of gender:

Jessie Bernard

Nancy Chodorow

Scott Coltrane

R.W. Connell

Arlene Daniels

Cynthia Fuchs Epstein

Carol Gilligan

Sandra Harding

bell hooks

Arlie Hochschild

Joan Huber

Janet Lever

Judith Lorber

Michael Messner

Alice Rossi

Barbara Katz Rothman

Judith Stacey

Deborah Tannen

Barrie Thorne

Maxine Baca Zinn

## Review materials for the MA comprehensive exam in Social Psychology

These review materials assume the student has had a graduate course in social psychology and/or independent reading courses in social psychology.

Typical description of the field:

*Social psychology is concerned with the relationships between individuals and social structures, whether these structures consist of intimate kinship or friendship groups or work groups, or complex organizations and institutional arrangements. Social psychologists concentrate on two fundamental questions: "How are people affected by social order, and how do people create the social order that shapes and molds their behavior?" These two questions, in turn, produce four fundamental problems pertaining to: (1) stability and change in human interaction; (2) the emergence of new forms and patterns of interaction; (3) conformity, conventionality, deviance, and power; and (4) social order and personal freedom. The link, then, between individuals and their societies is central to a sociological or social psychological view of human behavior. For most sociologists, "symbolic interactionism" forms the perspective for analyzing these issues.*

Important concepts to comprehend, to exemplify:

Symbolic interactionism  
The self and its social setting  
Social interaction and formation of conduct  
Social psychology and social order  
Impression management  
Society as objective reality  
Society as subjective reality  
Socialization  
Self and identity  
Symbolic communication and language  
Interpersonal attraction and relationships  
Attribution theory  
Social structure and personality

Other areas that sociologists often include in social psychology:

Cognitive labeling (Schachter, Schacter/Singer)  
Social movements  
Collective behavior  
Altruism  
Study of small groups (Sherif, Asch); cohesion, conformity, inter/intra group conflict, leadership, obedience (Milgram)  
Deviance  
Mental health  
Attitudes (balance theory, cognitive dissonance, reasoned action model)  
Emotions  
Typical texts:

Cook, Fine, and House (eds.) *Sociological Perspectives on Social Psychology*.  
Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.  
Hewitt, John. 2000. *Self and Society*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.  
Michener, H. Andrew and John D. Delamaater. 1999. *Social Psychology* (4th  
edition). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Primary sources:

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Blumer, Herbert. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. UCB Press.  
Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York:  
Doubleday.  
Smith, Dorothy. *Everyday World as Problematic*. Northeastern University Press.

Additional authors and topics:

Hochschild, Arlie--emotional labor, feeling rules  
Mead, George Herbert  
Kemper, Theodore  
Cooley  
Freud, Sigmund  
Erikson

## **Thesis Information and Materials**

For information regarding the CSUN thesis process and guidelines for thesis preparation, please visit the Graduate Studies website at: <http://www.csun.edu/grip/graduatestudies/thesis/>

At this website, you will find information related to:

- Thesis formatting deadlines
- Thesis submission deadlines
- Thesis preparation and formatting guidelines
- The Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) system
- Contact information for Graduate Studies Evaluators